

Our Health, Our Environment: Nurses Making the Connection at Home and at Work

DEP Overview of Environmental Issues



Recycling

- State goal is to increase recycling to 58%
- Important action to address climate change and reduce greenhouse gases
- Current state recycling rate is 25 %
- Find out what your town is currently recycling at the curb or transfer station
- Contact Dept. Of Public Works or recycling coordinator for information.

What must be recycled

1. Glass & metal food and beverage containers
2. Corrugated cardboard
3. Newspaper
4. White office paper (residences exempt)
5. Scrap Metal
6. Ni-Cd rechargeable batteries (from electronics)
7. Waste oil
8. Lead acid batteries (from vehicles)
9. Leaves

Remember to “close the loop”!

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collections

- HHW is generally defined as a household waste that is toxic, flammable, reactive or corrosive
- Limited number of collections per year (usually April-November)
- Get locations and dates for collection from DEP web site at:

http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2718&q=325448&depNav_GID=1646

Typical Products accepted at an HHW Collection

MDC HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION
 SEPTEMBER 24TH 8am – 1pm
 HARTFORD WATER POLLUTION CONTROL, 240 BRAINARD ROAD
 HazWaste Hotline: 278-3809

Acceptable Items

<u>Garage & Workshop</u>	<u>Kitchen & Bath</u>	<u>Yard & Hobby</u>
Antifreeze	Aerosol Cans	Artist's Paints
Gasoline	Ammonia	Brake Fluids
Mercury Thermostats	Drain Cleaners	Cleaning Solvents
Oil Based Paint	Disinfectants	Glues
Paint Stripper	Floor Care Products	Insecticides
Rechargeable Batteries	Mercury Thermometers	Mercury
Transmission Fluid	Oven Cleaners	Moth Balls
Turpentine	Polishes	Pool Chemicals

Unacceptable Items

Alkaline Batteries	Empty Containers of Any Kind	Medical Waste
Business Waste	Explosives	Propane Tanks
Car Batteries	Latex Paint	Tires
Electronics	Medicines	Waste Oil

Remember to bring spent compact fluorescent bulbs!

Electronics Recycling

- New law establishes “producer responsibility”
- Manufacturers will fund collection and recycling of used electronics – no cost to towns
- Includes: Computers, monitors, and TVs from households
- Towns will begin January 2009 with a disposal ban beginning 2011

Batteries

- Alkaline – ok to put in trash
- Nickel Cadmium (mandatory recyclable) – cordless phones, tools, video cameras
 - ◆ Recycle at Radio Shack, Home Depot, Sears, Target, Lowes, Staples or Wal-mart
 - ◆ call 1-800-8BATTERY or www.RBRC.com
- Some button cells / silver oxide (hearing aids, watches) - take back to store or HHW
- Rechargeables are a good option – creates less waste

CT's Mercury Legislation

- In 2002 established a program to eliminate non-essential uses of mercury in consumer and commercial products
- Some highlights:
 - ◆ banned sale of many products (incl. fever thermometers, blood pressure cuffs, thermostats)
 - ◆ includes formulated products such as fixatives and reagents
- BMP Guide for dental amalgam

Disposing unwanted prescription drugs and OTC products

THEN and NOW

Previously Common to dispose through sinks and drains to municipal sewers and water treatment facilities and disposal in hospital or municipal incinerators.

- Now evidence of impacts to drinking water, septic systems, fish, aquatic life
- Do Not Flush down toilet or sink
- Instead – modify, seal, conceal and put in trash

Remedy Program

- Recovered Medical Equipment for the Developing World
- Founded 1991 by Dr. William Rosenblatt at Yale-New Haven Hospital
- Unused surgical equipment (gloves, gowns, sutures, drapes, etc.) sent to countries in need
- Reduces medical waste for participating US hospitals
- www.remedyinc.org for more info

Green Cleaning at Home & Work

- Most household cleaning products contain toxic chemicals
 - ◆ Fumes – aggravates asthma, irritate lungs
 - ◆ Skin, eye irritant
- Choose least toxic cleaning products
 - ◆ Can be home-made or store-bought (eg. Seventh Generation, Ecover)
 - ◆ Avoid “**Poison**” (highly toxic) and “**Danger**” (flammable, corrosive, highly toxic) on the label
- State law - cleaning products used in state buildings “Green Seal” certified
 - ◆ towns, non-profits can use state contract to purchase

Organic Land Care

- Conventional lawn chemicals can pollute our water, harm wildlife and have adverse health effects on people and pets
- Use native plants
- Test soil so you don't use fertilizers unnecessarily
- Tolerate weeds
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn (grasscycling)
- Can use corn gluten, nematodes, compost as alternatives to chemicals

Organic Land Care

- New law prohibits applying lawn care pesticides to schools with students up to grade 8 with exemption for IPM plans
- Previous law requires notification of spraying
- Some CT towns have initiatives – project green lawn in Middletown, Freedom Lawn in Plainville, Cheshire, Milford

Energy

- Can purchase clean energy from renewables
 - ◆ available to CT households, businesses, towns
 - ◆ Approximately 45 towns & 16,000 customers
 - ◆ Clean Energy Options program –
www.cleanenergyoptions.com or
www.gocleanenergy.com
- Look for Energy Star products
- CT Clean Energy Fund \$ incentives for residential solar installations –
www.ctcleanenergy.com

Energy Efficiency For Hospitals

- CT Energy Efficiency Fund & CT Clean Energy Fund - \$ for hospitals
 - ◆ St. Francis Hospital – fuel cell
 - ◆ Norwalk Hospital \$1.1 million
 - ◆ Johnson Memorial Hospital - \$200,000
 - ◆ Danbury Hospital – Solar planned

Energy

- Compact fluorescent bulbs use a fraction of the electricity that incandescent bulbs use
 - ◆ Bulbs last for years
 - ◆ Bulbs contain some mercury, so need to be disposed as HHW
- Hold a Lighting Fair at Work
 - ◆ Can purchase for as little as \$1 each
 - ◆ To set up contact TechniArt, Adam Tardif
860.693.2450, adam.techniart@snet.net

Local and Sustainable Food

- Buying local reduces pollution and GHG, fresher food, supports local farms
 - ◆ At Home:
 - ◆ Shop at farmer's markets and supermarkets that sell CT Grown
 - ◆ At Schools:
 - ◆ CT Farms to Schools program with CT Dept of Agriculture (69 participating)

Local and Sustainable Foods

■ At Work:

- ◆ Health Care Without Harm healthy food pledge and assistance to get started
- ◆ Healthier, organic, antibiotic-free food for patients, staff and visitors
- ◆ www.noharm.org/us/food/pledge
- ◆ Fletcher Allen Hospital, VT
- ◆ New Milford, CT Hospital – “Plow to Plate program”

Driving Habits

- Engine exhaust contains toxic air pollutants and fine particles
 - ◆ can cause lung damage, aggravate respiratory conditions (asthma, bronchitis).

To improve air quality

- ◆ Drive less, combine trips, bike, walk, carpool
- ◆ Buy energy efficient vehicles, hybrids (some tax incentives on purchases)
- ◆ Do Not Idle - CT state laws, regs prohibit vehicles from idling for more than 3 minutes
- ◆ applies to all vehicles not just diesel buses and trucks, but to our cars as well.

For More Information

- CT DEP Pollution Prevention Program
 - ◆ 860-424-3297
 - ◆ Nan Peckham – nan.peckham@po.state.ct.us
 - ◆ Connie Mendolia -
connie.mendolia@po.state.ct.us
 - ◆ DEP Website – www.ct.gov/dep/p2
 - ◆ CT Hospital Environmental Roundtable (CHER)